



**For Immediate Release
September 9, 2009**

Contact: Kristen Hawn (202) 226-9782

Blue Dog Statement on President's Address to Congress

Washington, DC - Today, Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration, issued the following statement following President Obama's address to Congress.

“Over the past several months, the Blue Dogs have been working diligently with the President and other members of Congress to move forward with commonsense health care reform that the American people want and deserve. We simply cannot allow political gamesmanship and partisan bickering to stand in the way of meaningful reform.

“Blue Dogs believe we have a responsibility to pass health care reform legislation that is deficit neutral, increases the value and quality of care for all Americans, and that takes a responsible approach to controlling costs over the long term.

“Let me be clear: We simply cannot sustain the rising cost of health care. If we have any hope of reining in deficits and protecting our economy for future generations of Americans, we have to implement reform that addresses this critical issue.

“Blue Dogs agree with President Obama that the insurance market should be reformed. We must end the practice of denying coverage to individuals with pre-existing conditions, and we must eliminate the waste, fraud and abuse that is currently bankrupting the system.

“The Blue Dogs share the President's commitment to passing health care reform this year, and we look forward to continuing the important work of crafting this critical legislation.”

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 52 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/melancon/BlueDogs/>.